



E-Bulletin May 2021

1. How is the New Committee Going? When the new Committee took office on April 14 2021, the plan was to have a three-stage process. The first stage was to come to grips with what we had inherited from the previous administration. While we knew that things would not be up to scratch, what we inherited was far worse than we expected. This has put up under more pressure than we expected and has put us behind where we hoped to be at this stage. Our second step was to engage the Network Committee through the best practice model of the induction package that we had put together for them. We are still learning how to work together as a team. The next group to be brought on board is the U3A members and its members. We have begun with a small initiative in the production of two E-Bulletin. Starting next month, there will be a greater emphasis on the local U3As. These will include material on getting your U3A to make its comeback after COVID19 and a joint program that the local U3As and the Network Committee can work on together to raise much needed funding.

2. Regional Representatives: I am impressed with the initial work of the Regional Representatives (RR) with the organising Regional Forums at the moment.

In order that every U3A receives a consistent treatment by each RR, we have resurrected a set of the responsibilities moved in 2018 when I was Secretary. These items have been added to the role and responsibility document in the life of the new Committee. They state the roles and responsibility are:

1. A role on one or more on one of the sub-committees or a task relevant to the Network Committee;
2. Four face-to-face visits to each U3A in your Region - a visit to the AGM, one to the local U3A Management Committee, a social visit and a visit to an Enrolment Day; and
3. Over the period of a year, the Regional Representative shall do no more than 15 hours a fortnight in their role as an RR in their Region.

3. Rewriting Constitutions: According to the legislation that governs Registered Associations, every five years there is a review of the legislation, the Regulations and its Schedules and the Model Constitution. 2021 is one of those pivotal moments in the history of the legislation. It can take up to a year or so to review the legislation.

With this in mind, we would recommend you hold off on revising your current Constitution until the new legislation is ratified by the NSW Parliament.

The current legislation indicates that when a U3A is going to undertake a review of their Constitution, we need to ensure that you include all of the elements in your Constitution, then the Model Constitution becomes the the default document for the missing element.

The legislation covering our legal identity indicates that indicate that we only need to ensure that the Model Constitution. At an earlier chapter in our recent history, Carmen Champion (CC) developed another “model” Constitution for use by local U3As. This document was never passed by the Network Committee. Moreover, Carmen maintained that she owned the copyright to this document. As a result of her belief, U3As that have develop their Constitution based on the Carmen inspired document you will need to approach Carmen if, at any time, you decide to change the Carmen-inspired Constitution to ask for her permission to change her Constitution from her until entity. Until the new Department of Fair Trading (DOFT) Model Constitution, the Network Committee will guarantee your use of the Carmen Constitution. After the DoFT Model Constitution becomes available, we recommend all the U3As with Carmen’s model as a basis of their own develop a new Constitution based on the DoFT’s Model Constitution. You may believe that some sections of CC’s Constitution may be of value in their own Constitution may be of value to their new Constitution. You may need small part of the CC Constitution without breaking the copyright she believes she has.

At their first Committee, the new Committee, the new Committee moved 29 motions. The great majority of them were passed unanimously with only two exceptions noted One of the motions relevant motions here is that all those who appointed to a consultant’ role in the Association have been removed from their appointed position.

The second motion that is relevant here is that all consultants, however named, who claim that they own the copyright on the work done on behalf of the Association, they have been informed that their work will be removed from the website other places over the coming moths and not used in the Network ever again.

Because of the situation that the Network finds itself I for a number of reasons, the Network Committee move ahead quickly to re-write the Association’s Constitution as a matter urgency. It is impossible to govern appropriately with the Constitution as it now stands. The DoFT Model Constitution will be used to write the new Constitution

for the Association. The new Constitution will be available around September for the U3As to vote on it.

- 4. Mid North Coast & New England/North West Regions:** As a result of the recent elections for the Network Committee, there were two Regional Representatives positions from the Mid North Coast Region and the New England/North West/Region.

Applications are now called for the position vacant in the two Regions named above.

Nominations should be addressed to the President, Bob Birrer, no later than Friday June 26 at 5.00 pm.

If there is only 1 nomination, that person shall declared elected.

If there are 2 or 3 nominations, a ballot will be conducted with each U3A in the Region.

Each U3A in the respective Region has one vote per U3A. The candidate receiving the greatest number of votes will be considered elected.

We will not be following the previous Committee's practice of developing a preferred candidate, which may not be helpful to the democratic process.

An election package is also available from the President, Bob Birrer by phone or email.

- 5. Web Administrator:** Phil Warren, the Web Administrator, has indicated to the new Committee that it is his intention to step down from his position on Tuesday April 13. Given his generous nature, Phil has indicated that he will stay on until June 30 if necessary to give the new Committee a chance to recruit a new Web Administrator and facilitate an effective handover.

Applications are now called for the position of Web Administrator from suitable qualified members. This recruitment process will be handled by the Secretary, Helen Matthews, who has an extensive background in information management and information technology.

All applications can be addressed to Helen Matthews in the first place at hlnsecretary@gmail.com. Applicants are asked to have their applicants back by 5.00 pm, on June 26.

- 6. Volunteer to Assist Smaller U3As with IM/IT Needs:** Given that 5 smaller U3As have folded in the last 5 years, we would like to provide assistance to smaller U3As with their Information Systems and Information Technology needs.

Applications are now called for the position of a volunteer IM/IT Coordinator from suitable qualified members. This recruitment process will be handled by the Treasurer, Denise Challis. All applications can be addressed to Denise Challis in the first place at denisemchallis@gmail.com. Applicants are asked to have their applications back by 5.00 pm, on Friday June 26.

The Election process will be the same for the three positions outlined above. Only the dates and time for each election will change.

- 7. 30th Anniversary Celebrations:** 2021 is the 30th Anniversary of our foundation as an Association, albeit under another name. We intend to have a number of celebrations across the State over the rest of the State. We will be inviting our Regional Representatives to organise a function in their own Region. One celebration has already occurred as part of the Conference in Wagga Wagga. It could be as simple as the cutting of a cake and a cup of tea/coffee at a morning or afternoon. You can build on another event that you already have planned. You may decide to get together with a neighbouring U3A and have a celebration together. Or you decide to have a celebration at a Regional Forum where the U3A will be together for this event.

The main celebration will be part of a two-day celebration of our 30th Anniversary, which will feature a two-day workshop on a Strategic Planning event and a celebratory evening meal. The agenda will be that of a traditional strategic planning workshop. We are intending to invite the 64 U3A presidents or their delegate or someone in their U3A who has a passionate interest in strategic planning.

We are now seeking a U3A to host our 30th Anniversary. Ideally, we would like a U3A which is quite central to other U3As and have a capacity to organise it and would like to organise it. To express your interest in hosting the Workshop and the Dinner, please contact the President, Bob Birrer, on 0493 081 412 no later than June 26.

The U3A Network NSW will underwrite the event.

The Network will provide examples of strategic plan from other U3A Networks for your review. We are informed that the former committee was developing a strategic plan, which we will also make available. We believe that Strategic Plans are meant to be developed by the entire Network not just the Executive Committee. The danger is that the Strategic Plan is consigned to a dusty shelf unseen and unused to ensure that the Network is around for the next 30 years and beyond!

8. **U3A Day:** The Trust in England have announced that they will be celebrating U3A Day on June 03. While it might be difficult to get a celebration up this year, maybe we can get celebration next year.

9. **Conclusion:** I hope you are getting the service you asked for. I hope you are finding that there is no interference from the Network in the business of local U3As. I hope you are finding a difference of tone and reality in the way the Association conducts itself.